

that it is impossible to overcome the evils in us and the evils around us. The reason is that they have not the eyes of faith opened. They look at the seen, without insight to behold the unseen. They are discouraged, and live in the wilderness all their days.

6. Here and there stands forth a Caleb, who sees all that others see, but sees more—the unseen God on our side. He fears no foe, for he is strong in faith. He enters in and takes his inheritance.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

So nigh to the promised land! Why, from Israel's encampment it would seem as if one must see the bright flash of Canaan's sparkling rivers and the waving of the grain fields in the wind. And the breeze—ah, the delightful breeze from the north—one fancies it is loaded with the odors of grapes and figs and honey and dates. Fair land of promise! What interest attends the going out of the "spies," who shall secretly inspect the land and its approaches, and bring Israel word! Perhaps they start at night, that none of the tribes of the desert may see them.

I almost hear stout-hearted, full-of-faith Caleb saying, "Come, brothers, arise! The night is here, the moon is shining, away, away!"

And now they are gone. Patiently they travel. They steal a look at the cities. They glance at the villages. They slyly look down into the wells. They find out about the vineyards and the oliveyards of the people, their flocks and herds, horses and asses.

One day they come to Esheel.

O, Esheel, so sweet and green and fragrant a nook! So different from the stony wilderness with its hot, rough ways! Here are pomegranates and figs, and a brook tinkling down through the valley of life.

"O, brothers, how luscious are the grapes! What big clusters!" cries Caleb.

O, it is a goodly land! It is true that nowhere does this band find people whom they care to share their story with, and not a person asks them to stay over night. That means hostility.

Back they go, a sample of the Esheel grapes tied to the pole resting upon the shoulders of two of the spies.

Patiently they retrace their way.

"Look, brothers," I hear Caleb at last saying, "there are the tents of Israel!"

Yes, there is the far-stretching encampment, the tabernacle in the midst, and there is the smoking altar! How goodly the sight!

What a stir of welcome there is within the encampment when it is reached! There is Moses, so

serious usually, but smiling now! Here come Israel's princes and captains!

The people make a great ring round Caleb and his companions, hear their story, smack their lips over Esheel's pulpy grapes, delicious figs, and rich pomegranates!

But what are Caleb's fellow-pilgrims doing?

They tell of the walled cities of Canaan, of the children of Anak, of Amalekites and Hittites and Jebusites and Amorites and Canaanites—why, it is painful to see the people's faces lengthen as the report lengthens. Fear's black shadow is everywhere. People shake the head and sigh and despair. But full-of-faith Caleb has a little speech to make about the land!

"Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."

To-day, brothers, is his idea; God's to-day is our time!

But no, those other messengers shake their heads, twist their mouths into a mournful "O!" hang their faces with the sackcloth of despair, and give "an evil report of the land." Why, that land is one that "eateth up the inhabitants thereof," and then everybody there is a giant, and "we were in our own sight as grasshoppers!"

Giants and grasshoppers, that is the measure they report! How the people shrink and dwindle as they think the matter over! nothing but grasshoppers, grasshoppers, grasshoppers, all through the camp, while over the mountains we seem to see the tall sons of Anak looking and threatening to stride down upon Israel any moment and crush it out of existence. No, the promised land never can be Israel's!

Alas, so near the promised land, and yet to lose it!

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

BY J. T. GRACEY, D.D.

The spies being sent to see the land, what it was (verse 18), reached it (verse 20) at the "time of the first ripe grapes," and naturally enough selected these as specimens of agricultural development. They reported that the grapes were cut down in "clusters," as they are to-day, the largest clusters being selected and hung with strings in a ventilator, protected from the wintry cold, and dried in the bunch, in contrast with the raisin form of preservation. Clusters at Malaga, Spain, are to-day nailed against a board in the sun, and we may venture to say that whoever has not tasted the juice of the grape thus bottled in its own skin, separated from the pulp and seeds by the chemistry of the sun in a dry climate, cannot be said to know the deliciousness of grape flavor at its best.

These "clusters" are enormous grapes, about as big as a man's fist. Doubtless, the grapes are so big that they take weeks to eat. The men eat them in clusters, and have seen Damascus grapes in inches and hundreds.

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